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LETTER DATED 3 NOVEMBER 1993 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In recent reports to the Security Council concerning the work of the United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL), I have brought to the attention of the Council some worrying developments in the implementation of the Peace Accords between the Government of El Salvador and the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN), as well as in the electoral process, which ONUSAL was mandated to observe by the Security Council in resolution 832 (1993).

Among these developments has been the persistence of serious human rights violations which was reported by the Division of Human Rights of ONUSAL in its eighth report covering the period from 1 May to 31 July 1993 (S/26416 of 15 September 1993, para. VI, 1). In that report, the Director of the Division noted in particular that politically motivated violations had become more open, a development made more serious in view of the forthcoming electoral process (ibid., para. VI, 2). These concerns about the human rights situation were also mentioned in my report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on the Truth (S/26581 of 14 October 1993). In the context of the Commission's recommendation for the investigation of illegal groups (S/25500, Annex, V, II, C.), the report noted that cases of arbitrary executions over the past few months gave ground for concern that illegal groups were operating, whose methods seemed to repeat behavioural patterns prevailing in the past (S/26581, annex, para. 32).

On 25 October, I learned with shock and profound sadness of the execution, in death squad-style, of a leader of the FMLN. That assassination was followed on 30 October by the murder of another leading member of the FMLN. These killings have generated apprehension in El Salvador and the international community at large. They substantiate the concerns referred to in the above-mentioned reports and call for vigorous investigation. They also confirm the need for immediate implementation of the recommendation of the Commission on the Truth regarding investigation of illegal groups. I have, therefore, decided to instruct the Director of the Division of Human Rights of ONUSAL, with supplementary expert assistance as needed, to work with those concerned in order to assist the Government in implementing the recommendation of the Commission on the Truth that a thorough investigation of private armed groups be undertaken immediately. While the responsibility for implementation of that recommendation

lies with the Government, it is my view that the National Counsel for the Defence of Human Rights, within its responsibilities under the Constitution, could also play an important role.

Recent developments have also brought out the need to accelerate the implementation of other recommendations of the Commission on the Truth relating to the eradication of structural causes linked to human rights violations that occurred during the civil war and also to institutional reforms to prevent the repetition of such acts.

I should also like to recall the difficulties relating to the formation and deployment of the National Civil Police which I described in my report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on the Truth (S/25500, annex, para. 30). In addition to the fact that the deployment of the new police is far behind the schedule established in the Peace Accords, ONUSAL has met with persistent difficulties in carrying out its task of verifying that only individuals meeting certain criteria are recruited to the National Civil Police. Furthermore, the above-mentioned report stated that members of the Special Antidrug Unit of the National Police had already joined the National Civil Police even though ONUSAL had not yet been able to verify their suitability.

I should like to stress that the agreements relating to the creation of an exclusively civilian police are a key component of the Peace Accords. The Truth Commission also emphasized the need to ensure that there were no links between the National Civil Police and the former security bodies or any other branch of the armed forces (S/25500, Annex, II.B). It is therefore essential that the provisions of the Peace Accords regarding the National Academy for Public Security and the National Civil Police should be scrupulously fulfilled. Together with other reforms, they will establish a framework conducive to national reconciliation and observance of human rights. ONUSAL must be allowed to carry out its verification mandate unimpeded.

Finally, I should like to recall the delays and difficulties which I described in my first periodic report on the electoral process (S/26606 of 20 October). The forthcoming elections in El Salvador are to be the culmination of the whole peace process. It is essential to the credibility of the electoral process that the registration of voters should be as comprehensive as possible. Accordingly, it is my hope that the Government of El Salvador and the institutions involved in the registration process will make every effort, with the assistance of ONUSAL, to overcome existing deficiencies and ensure that all eligible Salvadorians have an opportunity to be duly registered so that they can play a full part in deciding the future of their country.

Under the timetable initially agreed upon by the parties, implementation of most provisions of the Peace Accords should have been completed before the general elections in March 1994. Delays in implementation will, however, make it impossible to reach that objective in some areas, in particular the phasing out of the National Police and full deployment of the National Civil Police. There are also considerable delays in the transfer of lands and other reintegration programmes. But the recent murders have brought into sharper focus the need to accelerate the implementation of the Accords in order to set the stage for a genuinely free and fair electoral process. At a high-level meeting on 8 September 1993, in which ONUSAL participated, the Government and

the FMLN agreed on the need to step up the implementation process with a view to "sweeping the table clean" before 20 November 1993, when the electoral campaign will begin. I fully share that sense of urgency and have requested my Special Representative in El Salvador to exercise the utmost diligence in promoting a comprehensive implementation of the Peace Accords by the target dates agreed upon by the parties.

I would be grateful if you would be kind enough to bring this information to the attention of the Members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI